

News Release



Contact: Megan Blaney
Public Information Officer, (909) 387-5870
Pager: 1-800-426-8689, access code 2119

February 3, 2011

*Denise L. Benson, Division Manager
San Bernardino County Fire Department
Office of Emergency Services*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Low-interest federal disaster loans are now available to San Bernardino County residents and business owners affected by the severe winter storms that occurred December 17, 2010 through January 4, 2011. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) acted under its own authority to declare a disaster following the denial on January 27, 2011 of the state's request for a major disaster declaration.

SBA's disaster declaration makes assistance available in 11 California counties, including San Bernardino. Low-interest federal disaster loans are available to homeowners, renters, business of all sizes and private, non-profit organizations whose property was damaged or destroyed by the disaster. The San Bernardino County Office of Emergency Services (OES) is partnering with state and federal agencies to set up centers where residents may find information about SBA loans available to them. Beginning February 8, 2011, SBA customer service representatives will be on hand at SBA Disaster Loan Outreach Centers to issue loan applications, answer questions about the disaster loan program, explain the application process and help each individual complete their application. Please see the attached release from SBA for more information about the centers.

"These low-interest loans are very important in the recovery of our residents," said Josie Gonzales, Chair of the County Board of Supervisors. "Given the economic restraints, it is advantageous to have this assistance. The County will continue to assist residents access whatever resources exist to help restore properties damaged or destroyed by the December rain storms."

In addition, additional resources for victims of the December 2010 and January 2011 storms and floods are available on OES' website at www.sbcfire.org/oes and click on Disaster Preparedness and Recovery. Residents may also call 2-1-1 for more information about resources.

These federal declarations were based upon data compiled by Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) teams consisting of representatives from State and Federal governments who toured various damaged sites in the County during the first week in January. City and County representatives met with the teams to show them the significant public and private property damage so they could determine the estimated amount of damage. The countywide storm damage total now exceeds \$98.4 million. Of that, \$77.8 is Public Assistance and \$19.55 is Individual Assistance. From these visits, it was announced earlier this month that San Bernardino County received a Presidential Declaration for Public Assistance (PA) which means that FEMA will cover 75 percent of the eligible costs; CalEMA will cover 18.75 percent of the eligible costs; the local government agency is responsible for the remaining 6.25 percent.



*Dan Wurl
Fire Chief*